

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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JAEGER SPONSORS ELECTION REFORM WORKSHOP FOR ELECTION OFFICIALS

Grand Forks, ND – Secretary of State Al Jaeger is sponsoring a workshop to educate county election officials concerning changes coming to elections and voting in North Dakota.

Jaeger's office is conducting the training to better educate county election officials about the new election and voting requirements contained in the federal election reform law, the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA). The workshop is being held in conjunction with the North Dakota County Auditors' Association annual summer convention in Grand Forks beginning on June 10.

Doug Lewis, Executive Director of the Election Center based out of Houston, Texas, a national nonprofit organization serving the elections profession, and nationally known expert in the area of election administration, will moderate and facilitate the training, at the invitation of Jaeger's office. As the Executive Director of the Election Center, Lewis was instrumental in the formation of the federal election reform law, and continues to play an important role in providing guidance about its application and implementation.

"We are fortunate to have Doug Lewis in North Dakota," said Jaeger. "Doug and the Election Center have been critical to the advancement of election administration as a profession and discipline in our country. The county auditors will learn a lot from him."

Jaeger's workshop is part of the state's HAVA planning process that the Secretary of State's office is required to conduct. HAVA requires each state to develop a statewide plan for implementing election reform and allocating the associated federal moneys. North Dakota has already received federal funds of five million dollars and expects to receive another four million dollars by the end of the year.

An eighteen-member State HAVA Planning Committee, appointed by Jaeger, has been meeting to develop the state's plan for implementing HAVA. The planning committee includes county and local election officials along with representation from the disability and senior citizen communities, the Indian Affairs Commission, the technology sector, voter interest groups, and private citizens. During the State HAVA Planning Committee's initial meetings, the group has been working on a preliminary plan tailored to North Dakota's particular needs. It was drafted by a steering committee comprised of staff from the Secretary of State's office, the North Dakota Association of Counties, and several County Auditors.

During the workshop, Lewis will lead discussions about the state planning process and provide feedback and commentary concerning North Dakota's draft plan. Throughout the remainder of the summer, the state planning committee will continue meeting to finalize a plan that must be submitted to the newly created Federal Election Administration Commission and be published in the Federal Register.

"I am pleased that Doug is here to offer his perspective and guidance to our reform efforts," said Jaeger. "His expertise in HAVA are unparalleled and we plan on taking advantage of his time with us to gauge his response to our efforts."

As the Executive Director of the Election Center, Lewis has distinguished himself as an election administration expert in many ways. Lewis has developed and authored the Professional Education Program for elections and registration officials, the most extensive professional training program in the world for elections officials. The Professional Education Program is being copied by other governments, and was named as the best continuing education program in the nation by the National University Continuing Education Association (1995). Other accomplishments of Lewis include:

- Development of the first Code of Ethics for elections administrators.
- Establishment of the Professional Practices Papers program, which promotes sharing successful practices among election officials.
- Establishment of the Joint Elections Officials Liaison Committee, which is a confederation of American elections organizations who, along with The Election Center, promote common interests of the elections profession.
- Establishment of the National Postal Task Force, which created the Official Elections Mail Logo and continues to break new ground for cooperation between government and the US Postal Service.
- Establishment of the National Task Force on Voting Accessibility.
- Establishment of the National Task Force on Election Reform, which studied and proposed solutions to the problems of the 2000 Presidential Election

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See attached information for more information about Doug Lewis, Executive Director – Election Center